

Date: Fri, 19 Feb 93 04:30:25 PST  
From: Ham-Policy Mailing List and Newsgroup <ham-policy@ucsd.edu>  
Errors-To: Ham-Policy-Errors@UCSD.Edu  
Reply-To: Ham-Policy@UCSD.Edu  
Precedence: Bulk  
Subject: Ham-Policy Digest V93 #43  
To: Ham-Policy

Ham-Policy Digest                      Fri, 19 Feb 93                      Volume 93 : Issue    43

Today's Topics:

                    Abandonment of CW  
         Eliminate the Written Exam (4 msgs)  
         Exam of No Code Tech (2 msgs)

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Send subscription requests to: <Ham-Policy-REQUEST@UCSD.Edu>  
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We trust that readers are intelligent enough to realize that all text  
herein consists of personal comments and does not represent the official  
policies or positions of any party. Your mileage may vary. So there.  
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Date: 18 Feb 93 18:38:38 GMT  
From: idacrd!tang!n4hy@uunet.uu.net  
Subject: Abandonment of CW  
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

> 1) People who have acquired a higher level of knowledge and skill  
>because they want to use it.

> 2) People who worked to pass exams to gain access to some bits of  
>bands forbidden to others, or just for the bragging rights, and make no  
>real use of the enhanced level of knowledge they had to demonstrate,  
>once.

> Those in the first group are the sort of people who would increase  
>their knowledge and skills anyway, for use in their hobby, without any  
>need for formal certificates. They generate progress. They deserve  
>encouragement, but they don't need it.

> The second group should not be encouraged at all, those of them who

>just want some band segments as a form of exclusive club do nothing to  
>enhance the hobby (nor do they do much damage) but those who pour scorn  
>on those with lesser licences - actively discouraging them from  
>continuing in the hobby.

This is snobbery in its worst form. Given my long history of R&D for amateur radio, I clearly belong on group 1. I can tell you that I got my extra to belong in group 2 (after I got my second FCC notice for 'straying' into the bottom of 40 meters). It is a legitimate reason to be in amateur radio. It is a legitimate reason for upgrading. There are too few people in group 1 to justify the incentive licensing. There are too many divisive elements to your statement and I for one cannot support the sentiments expressed. We are going to come under increasing pressure from the deletion of those bands where we hold secondary status because of the elimination of the primary user (DOD) and we must not be seen as bickering over the edges (no pun intended). No code is a success if you define it as only increasing numbers of hams. Time will tell if it has been a success in that people move up the incentive trail.

BMc

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Robert W. McGwier | Bob's interests include amateur radio,  
Institute for Defense Analyses | astronomy, and golf (10 handicap fanatic)  
Center for Communications Research | Asst. Scoutmaster BSA Troop 5700  
Princeton, N.J. 08520 | n4hy@ccr-p.ida.org (internet)  
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Date: Thu, 18 Feb 1993 04:14:58 GMT  
From: era!mark@uunet.uu.net  
Subject: Eliminate the Written Exam  
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

[I don't usually get involved in these little debates, but what the heck!]

On rec.radio.amateur.policy, alanb@hpnmdla.sr.hp.com (Alan Bloom) posts:

>  
> [KC6--- does lots of public-service work but has no interest in  
> Amateur Radio's technical aspects.]  
>  
> There must be many people like her who could contribute to amateur  
> radio but don't see the point in learning a lot of useless formulas.

Like KC6---, someone who's genuinely interested in getting into Amateur Radio for its non-technical aspects will probably be quite happy with a Technician-class ticket and will put in the work required

to get it. After all, it'll be good forever so long as it's renewed every ten years with no need to learn anything else technical.

- > You know what you're looking for -- every major
- > city has one (or several) -- the "garbage" repeater with foul
- > language, frequent arguments, unidentified transmissions and
- > intentional interference. If the present license exams are acting
- > as a "filter," they sure aren't doing a very good job.

The exam system wasn't designed to filter out poor operators; it filters out people who won't put in the effort to learn the required material so they can start out as \_good\_ operators. It's up to everyone else to (a) set people with bad technique straight, (b) ignore them entirely and hope they'll go away or (c) hope the FCC gets 'em and yanks their call letters. (Perhaps instead of element 2 we need to have a psychological profile with an unpublished set of ``right'' answers? NOT!)

- > I say, eliminate the written exam entirely. Even the rules and
- > regulations part -- nobody remembers that stuff anyway, and you can
- > always look it up if you need to.

Ah, but the question is, WHERE do you look it up? Even if you don't remember the specifics of something, learning it once and forgetting it leaves enough residue to remember where to start looking. (And who wants to wade through Part 97 just to find the edges of the 10m band, anyway?)

Not to resurrect the driving analogy, but I'm curious: are you also in favor of eliminating the written exam for driver's licenses, even the parts about the rules and regulations? When on the air you can QSY, but when Joe ``I got a no-rules driver's license'' Idiot decides to run that red light while you're in the intersection, whatchagonnado? While it's true that a car is more dangerous a weapon than the 50-watt mobile rig inside, there's still plenty of potential for trouble.

- > Amateur radio is dying on the vine -- we are becoming a hobby of old
- > men. Young kids typically don't have much trouble with the code exam,
- > but the written exam can be a real barrier. If we are to protect our
- > frequencies before the FCC and Congress, we need to increase our
- > numbers, and eliminating the written exam would be a giant step in
- > that direction.

According to a recent edition of the \_W5YI Report\_, the number of existing licenses and applications for new ones are at an all-time high as a result of the change in the requirements for the Technician class. And some of those new applicants \_are\_ old men (and women).

> By the way, all these arguments hold equally well for the code exam.  
> If you believe the code exam should be eliminated, then the same  
> arguments hold for the written exam as well.

I don't believe either should be eliminated, so I'll be visiting my local VE in a few weeks to take another code element and two more written.

If you want more people to become hams, GET MORE PEOPLE INTERESTED. And before you eliminate those written exams, wait 'till I get my Extra, okay? Some of us actually like learning the material and the sense of accomplishment we get after having upgraded.

73.

- Mark

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.....  
: Mark A. Feit          KD4TAJ : Internet: mark@era.com      :  
: Engineering Research Associates : USENET: ...!uunet!era!mark :  
.....  
      "Keep BSD Free -- Boycott AT&T"
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Date: 18 Feb 93 20:16:51 GMT  
From: news-mail-gateway@ucsd.edu  
Subject: Eliminate the Written Exam  
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

AL N1AL suggests that those that argue for the elimination of the code exam should also want to eliminate the written exams.

I disagree.

The problem with this argument is that it ignores the reason why we are licensed. I have pointed this out before but at the risk of repeating myself:

We are licence so that we cause interference to other services we can be found. That's why we each have a unique call sign. There is a written exam to demonstrate that we know something of the rules of the service and that we know enough to not cause interference to other services (or you neighbors TV!). There is a Morse code test which primarily was introduced so if you interfered with another service they could tell you to QRT and you would understand.

Of course the exams have changed a bit and Incentive Licensing threw a spanner (wrench) in the works. So these ideas have been extended over the years, but in some countries (notably the UK) the exam is still

biased in this direction. There is no need to know about packet or any other "fancy" techniques, but you should know about harmonics and spurious signals, how to measure them, and how to remove the problem.

I'm a minimalist. I would like to see the US licensing system revert to a minimalist system. Code is now irrelevant. We should pull back to 5 wpm and press for a change in the ITU regulations.

I would see a two class system (once the code has finally gone):

One class would be able to do everything but with a reduced power restriction (maybe 100W, maybe less -- we could argue about this one). This power reduction is accomplished by an easing in the written requirements to about the current level of general/tech. relating to the rules, interference, safety, operating practise and a few other essentials.

The other class class (allowing up to the current legal maximum) would test the knowledge related to solving interference problems (perhaps even including a practical exam). Perhaps you might not be able to build higher power (> 5W) transmitters with the former licence but you would with this licence.

Not that non of the above affects what people can do in the amateur service: public service, packet, QRP, EME, DXing, whatever. It just sets a minimal technical requirement. The bottom line is: amateur radio is NOT CB or GMRS or any other public service band. It is a hobby where some technical knowledge is important. The licensing requirements should reflect this, but the examination scheme should NEVER have capricious components to keep people out of the service.

The only reason we have licences is to track our interference, not to help us chase DXCC!

Kevin Purcell N7WIM / G8UDP

a-kevinp@microsoft.com

"We conjure the spirits of the computer with our spells"

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Date: 19 Feb 1993 01:47:28 GMT

From: usc!howland.reston.ans.net!newsserver.jvnc.net!yale.edu!ira.uka.de!  
sol.ctr.columbia.edu!usenet.ucs.indiana.edu!master.cs.rose-hulman.edu!  
master.cs.rose-hulman.edu!news@network.UCSD.EDU

Subject: Eliminate the Written Exam

To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

In article <14600044@hpnmdla.sr.hp.com> alanb@hpnmdla.sr.hp.com (Alan Bloom) writes:

>  
> Amateur radio is dying on the vine -- we are becoming a hobby of old  
> men. Young kids typically don't have much trouble with the code exam,  
> but the written exam can be a real barrier. If we are to protect our  
> frequencies before the FCC and Congress, we need to increase our  
> numbers, and eliminating the written exam would be a giant step in  
> that direction.

Bull, No matter what you do, you couldn't get enough people in Amateur Radio to even make a ripple in the pool of lobbying and big business in Washington. And for the written exam being a barrier, ONLY if you are talking about a 3rd grader is going to be true. Young kids are more likely to be able to memorize things that they want to learn than older folks, and that's all the written test amounts to - memorization.

Dave W09M (19 years old - College EE major)

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Date: 18 Feb 93 09:41:26 EST  
From: sdd.hp.com!ncr-sd!ncrcae!ncrhub2!ncrgw2!psinntp!arrl.org@network.UCSD.EDU  
Subject: Eliminate the Written Exam  
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

In rec.radio.amateur.policy, perry@hpfco.FC.HP.COM (Perry Scott) writes:  
>Nice sarcasm, Alan. Too bad it will be lost on a few.

A few?

Perry and Gary (sounds like a vaudeville team!) win the cookies for being the only posters with enough brains to recognize sarcasm when they read it.

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Jon Bloom, KE3Z | jbbloom@arrl.org  
American Radio Relay League | Justice is being allowed to do whatever  
225 Main St. | I like. Injustice is whatever prevents  
Newington, CT 06111 | my doing so. -- Samuel Johnson

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Date: Thu, 18 Feb 1993 14:20:40 GMT  
From: usc!howland.reston.ans.net!gatech!concert!seq!brant@network.UCSD.EDU  
Subject: Exam of No Code Tech  
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

I don't see the test as a filter, but I don understand the fact the most people will take more care of thing that they work harder to

obtain. I just passed my no code tech exam and I was very easy,  
and can see the point in making it harder and having code on it.

I don't really see the point in having different "levels". Why  
not just make a hard test and be done with it.

I became a HAM because I'm hiking the App. Trail this summer and wanted  
a way to get help if the need arose. So I have little incentive to  
go to a higher licence since I can use all of 2meter band without it.

Chuck

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| "What doesn't kill us makes us stronger"   Spoken by many A.T. hikers   |
+-----+
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Date: 18 Feb 1993 16:37:43 GMT  
From: usc!cs.utexas.edu!tamsun.tamu.edu!cs.tamu.edu!willis@network.UCSD.EDU  
Subject: Exam of No Code Tech  
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

What most people seem to have missed (and it helps to have read Al's  
posts before) is that the whole point of his "suggestion" is contained  
at the end:

"By the way, all these arguments hold equally well for the code exam.  
If you believe the code exam should be eliminated, then the same  
arguments hold for the written exam as well.

AL N1AL"

And this last part is false. The written tests serve to validate your  
knowledge of operating practices, regulations and equipment that you  
\*must\* use. CW tests validate your knowledge of a mode you \*may\* use.

I don't think CW testing should be eliminated as a requirement for HF  
access. I don't see any reason other than ancient history that it should  
be a requirement for \*advancement\*. Why advance? What if one would like  
to be a VE or operate space-based gear?

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End of Ham-Policy Digest V93 #43  
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